UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Sunday, June 21, 2026

July Discussion?

As blog readers will know, the systemwide Academic Senate is embarking on a study of admissions practices - including the idea of reintroducing the SAT - known as the "roadmap." Although the announcement of the roadmap appeared after a petition by STEM (and later non-STEM) faculty to return to the SAT, the plan for the roadmap was developed before the petition made the news. So it was not responsive to that petition.

When the roadmap was announced, UC President Milliken issued a statement:

University of California President James B. Milliken today (June 11) issued the following statement on the UC Academic Senate plan to review admissions policies:

The Board of Regents and University leadership take very seriously the critical issue of college preparedness, and the UC Academic Senate has proposed a comprehensive, data-driven review to support its recommendations to strengthen student readiness and success at UC. There are few things more important on our agenda. The faculty review will focus on both preparation and admissions, including whether standardized testing should be required. It's important that UC gets this right. ***The UC Board of Regents and I will receive an update on the Academic Assembly's work in July****, and we look forward to considering the recommendations that emerge from this important work.*

Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-president-milliken-statement-academic-senate-plan-review-admissions-policies.

As blog readers will know, yours truly has suggested that an appropriate response to the faculty petition would be to do an accelerated study over the summer and have discussion with the Regents at their September meeting. That approach would have been truly responsive. Saying that the topic will be discussed in July sounds like a super-acceleration. But in fact, all that will be said in July is that there is a (non-responsive) roadmap in place that will require a full year of study. Realistically, what else could be said at a Regents meeting only a month away? Nothing will have happened other than the announcement of the (slow) roadmap.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, Milliken, UC, UC Regents

Straws in the Wind - Part 379

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- Defend Research Funding
- Trump admin drops appeal in AAUP et al. v. Trump
- 2025: The Year UC Faculty Fought Back and Won
- Faculty Join SB895 Rally to Save Science, Save Lives
- CA Research Funding Clears First Legislative Hurdle

Remaking the University

- A Response to the Report on Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences by One of Its Targets (Guest Post) - 6/15/2026
- We Need to Build Actual Political Support for the Humanities (Guest Post) - 6/12/2026
- The Ceiling of Liberalism and the Concept of Capital (guest post) - 6/9/2026

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Inside Higher Education
- Remaking the University
- Changing Universities
- California Professor

Search This Blog

Search

UC Faculty Associations

- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)
- UC-AFT

From the Chronicle of Higher Education: *A regional public college that faced declining enrollment tried to stem the bleeding two years ago by laying off over 100 people, including all of its faculty librarians. Now Western Illinois University has to hire the librarians back. An arbitrator ruled in late May that Western Illinois improperly laid off all of its faculty librarians and two additional faculty members, and ordered the university to rescind the layoffs, provide back pay, and reinstate those who wish to return.*

Altogether, Western Illinois issued layoff notices to 124 faculty and staff members in 2024, including nine librarians, but the library was the only department to lose all of its faculty members. The university cited a decline in student enrollment of 20.6 percent since 2017. The decision to gut the library drew national attention and reignited a longstanding debate about the role of the librarian in academe today...

The university is reviewing the arbitrator's decision "while working with [the union] to determine the details of implementation and next steps," according to a written statement...

Full story at https://www.chronicle.com/article/a-regional-college-laid-off-all-its-librarians-in-2024-now-it-has-to-hire-them-back.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Western Illinois U

Greetings of the Season

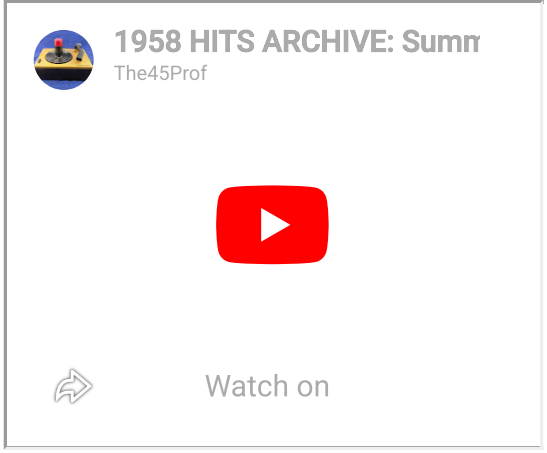
Whatever your taste:

Topics

politics (2533) UC (2178) UC Regents (1924) health care (1458) State Budget (1291) governor (1146) diversity (1046) UC budget crisis (983) UC-Berkeley (936) pension (664) pensions (594) admissions (575) athletics (563) tuition (540) CSU (428) transportation (404) UC-Davis (379) online education (340) UCOP (320) uc retirement (315) traffic (308) ucrp (301) audio (291) UC enrollment (285) new hotel-conference center (282) UC-San Diego (272) enrollment (263) community colleges (256) LAO (238) UC-Irvine (186) fund raising (174) UC-Santa Barbara (164) UC-San Francisco (161) UC-Santa Cruz (159) controller (155) faculty center (144) UC-Riverside (143) ballot propositions (132) CalPERS (122) UC-Merced (118) Master Plan (113) faculty pay (109) Yudof (90) UCRS retirement (62) parking (62) Faculty Association at UCLA (61) privatization (59) CalSTRS (50) copyright (36) UC Berkeley (35) campus climate survey (28) UCRS (22) Michigan Model (18) UC Merced (17) uc funding (16) Regents (15) State Contribution (14) UCOF (14) faculty recruitment (12) UC pay (7) graduate education (6) UC San Diego (5) UCpolitics (4) UC Irvine (3) teaching evaluation (3) UC Santa Cruz (2)

Blog Archive

▼ 2026 (610)
▼ June (66)
July Discussion?
Straws in the Wind - Part 379
Greetings of the Season
Fake?
Straws in the Wind - Part 378
Federal Updates are not updated
No Grade Inflation at Berkeley for AI
Straws in the Wind - Part 377
Stay away from Wilshire
Interview
Straws in the Wind - Part 376
Another Scam
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 171
Back to the Future
Straws in the Wind - Part 375
"Budget" passed by deadline



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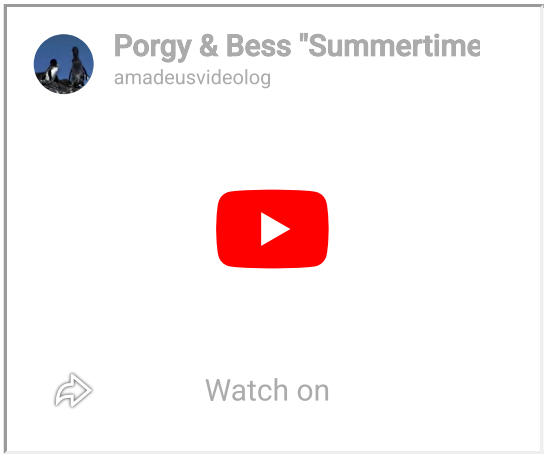

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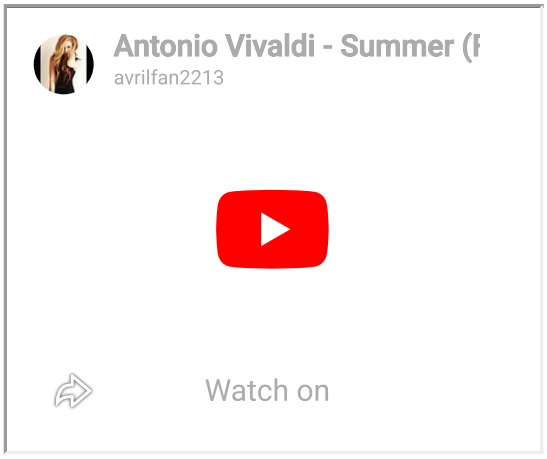
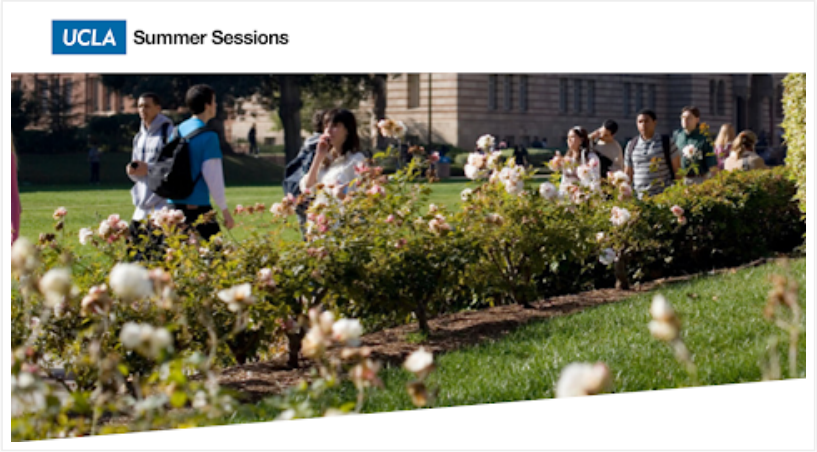


Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KY1p-FmjT1M.

More on the Assembly
Straws in the Wind - Part 374
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge?- Part 170
The midnight state budget deadline approaches
Slowly following the roadmap
Straws in the Wind - Part 373
Joining
Forecasting
Cutting Down
Straws in the Wind - Part 371
This too shall pass...
Transfers
Straws in the Wind - Part 371
Still Ahead
Straws in the Wind - Part 370
Assembly Meeting Today
Revived
Straws in the Wind - Part 369
Delays
Let's not forget about Canvas
Straws in the Wind - Part 368
Interview
Straws in the Wind - Part 367
Yet Another Scam
Definitely legit
Straws in the Wind - Part 366
Another closed-door meeting coming up
State Senate/Assembly Resolution on AI
Straws in the Wind - Part 365
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 169
Coming soon to a campus near you?
Straws in the Wind - Part 364
Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 168
UCPD Policy Review - Public Comment
Straws in the Wind - Part 363
Shifting Gears
The Forecast
Union News
Straws in the Wind - Part 362
Sliding into a problem
AI Ban at Berkeley Law
Straws in the Wind - Part 361
You didn't miss it because you weren't invited
What needs to happen on the SAT: Pay attention Aca...
Squeeze 'em harder, says LAO
Straws in the Wind - Part 360
New Dean Today
Straws in the Wind - Part 359



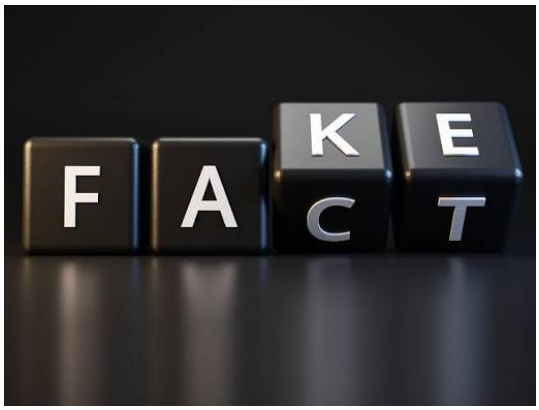
The first classes of summer session begin tomorrow, June 22.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Saturday, June 20, 2026

Fake?



From the NY Times: ...*[Hany Farid] rode down from the hills on his motorcycle to give his last public lecture of the spring semester at Berkeley, passing the A.I. billboards that had become ubiquitous across the Bay Area. They were for start-ups promising to reinvent medicine, disrupt education and transform the future of business. "Stop Hiring Humans," one billboard read. Farid parked on campus and walked into the lecture hall, where 75 students looked back at him.*

He was one of Berkeley's most popular professors — kinetic, unfiltered and genuinely thrilled by the advancements in A.I. technology at the heart of his courses. He had A.I. agents that wrote code for him. He had a car that could drive itself on the highway. He had apps on his phone that could tighten the phrasing in his emails or turn a photo of his spice drawer into a recipe for weeknight chili. But the computer science majors in his classes were struggling to find jobs as companies waited to see what machines could do first. For the first time in his career, Farid sometimes stood in front of students and found himself at a loss for what to tell them...*

"This technology is being weaponized against us," he told the students. "The train has left the station. It's accelerating at a speed that's unbelievable." ...

He paced at the front of the room and started to show slides of A.I. videos from the last several years. A fake image of the Pentagon exploding had briefly rattled the stock market in 2023, erasing more than $500 billion in a few minutes. Deepfakes from the war in Ukraine were still fairly easy to identify, with discolored explosions and misshaped buildings. Gaza fakes were much better. By the start of the Iran war, short A.I. footage was essentially indistinguishable from real video. Now thousands of North Korean government operatives were applying for remote jobs at U.S. companies, using A.I. to impersonate Americans in real time on Zoom calls and then funding a nuclear weapons program with their salaries. A nontechnical criminal, Farid said, could now use a still photograph and a 10-second audio clip to shape shift into anyone online.

"You might think you can look and tell the difference while you're sitting there doom scrolling," he said. "Believe me, you can't. That's where our methods come in."

He had helped invent algorithmic tools to verify a person's mannerisms, vocal inflections and blood flow. When a real person spoke, the eyes dilated and the heart pumped blood in and out

The Budget Process

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 167

► May (104)
► April (110)
► March (111)
► February (106)
► January (113)

► 2025 (1139)
► 2024 (832)
► 2023 (828)
► 2022 (719)
► 2021 (710)
► 2020 (914)
► 2019 (671)
► 2018 (595)
► 2017 (666)
► 2016 (715)
► 2015 (765)
► 2014 (704)
► 2013 (776)
► 2012 (839)
► 2011 (738)
► 2010 (431)
► 2009 (12)

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

of the face. Farid could sometimes measure subtle differences in skin color to see a person's heart beating in real time, whereas an A.I. avatar was flatlined.

Farid said he was still confident that he could solve almost any A.I. mystery, but the problem was that each investigation took time. The half-life of an average social media post was less than 90 seconds. "Within 20 minutes, the whole ballgame's basically over," Farid said. Many times, he finished his analysis, looked up from his computer and realized the damage was already done. A fake had hardened into a fact. A fact had blurred into doubt.

A hand went up in the audience, and Farid pointed to a student in the front row.

"So, the creation of deepfakes is easy, cheap, fast and reliable," the student said. "Detection is costly and difficult."

"Yes," Farid said.

"Is there a solution in the near future, or are we just screwed?"

He paused and took a breath. He thought about the Orozco mural, the school in Iran, the deepfakes piling up in his inbox and the farm waiting in Vermont. He still believed there were solutions. But first, he wanted people to understand what they were up against.

"We're pretty screwed," he said...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/14/us/ai-deepfake-hany-farid.html.

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*https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hany_Farid.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UC-Berkeley

Straws in the Wind - Part 378

From the Columbia Daily Spectator: *Columbia will once again require standardized test scores for undergraduate applicants, beginning in August 2027, the University announced Friday. With the change, Columbia is the final Ivy League school to reinstate test score requirements, which most universities made optional in 2020. Students applying to Columbia College or the School of Engineering and Applied Science will be required to submit SAT or ACT scores for the 2027-28 admissions cycle. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many universities, including Columbia, waived standardized testing requirements, citing concerns about access to testing opportunities. Columbia has deviated from its peers by extending the waiver for more than three years after the pandemic ended.*

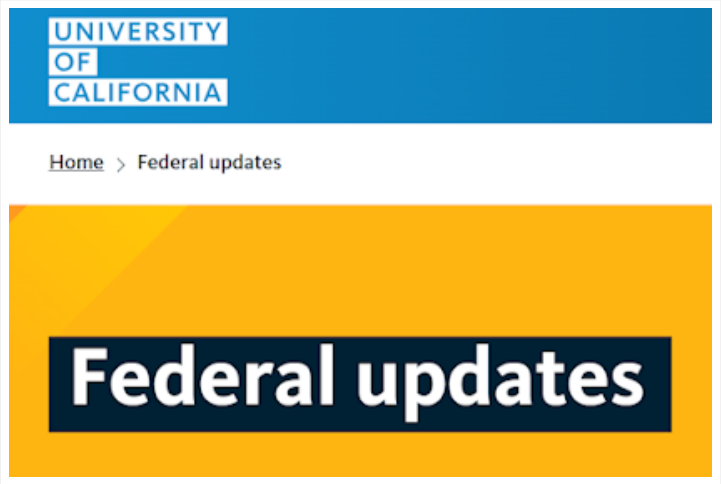
The other seven Ivy League institutions have already reinstated the requirement; Yale University was the latest to do so, announcing the change in May. The revision comes after a multiyear faculty review which found that test scores were a "useful indicator of potential student success," according to the statement from the University...

Full story at https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2026/06/12/columbia-becomes-last-ivy-to-reinstate-standardized-test-scores-requirement-post-covid/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, Columbia

Federal Updates are not updated



We have commented on this matter before but a reminder to the powers-that-be at UCOP that the "Federal updates" link on the UC website* - which is supposed to keep us current with the UC conflict with the feds - hasn't actually provided any information on federal developments since last October.

There is stuff thereafter on the site, mainly about the state bond UC is promoting, but nothing more directly on federal developments. Of course, the state bond idea was originally a response to funding cutoffs by the feds. But the Regents have had numerous closed-door meetings since October which seem to be about actual federal developments, so presumably there is something more to be shared.

We have an indication that despite court victories by UC, federal research funding has not fully (mainly?) resumed. Any info on that issue? What is happening to existing grants and contracts that were suspended? What is the success rate for new grants and renewals? Inquiring minds want to know!

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*https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/federal-updates.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UCOP

Friday, June 19, 2026

No Grade Inflation at Berkeley for AI

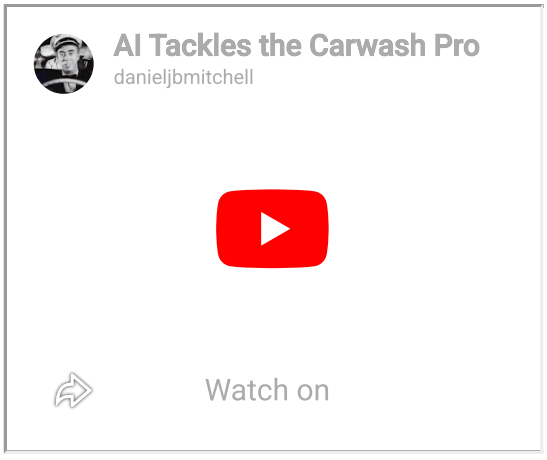
From the Daily Californian: *In collaboration with more than 300 industry experts, UC Berkeley researchers have released a new benchmark testing AI capabilities in more than 50 industries. Of the models tested,* ***OpenAI's GPT-5.5 scored the highest, but only with a 24% pass rate****. The benchmark, dubbed Agents' Last Exam, or ALE, is led by the Berkeley Center for Responsible, Decentralized Intelligence. The exam assigns tasks spanning subjects from audio processing to theoretical physics. A rival model, Anthropic's Claude Fable 5, followed GPT-5.5 at a 22% overall pass rate, with Google Gemini, DeepSeek and Grok all scoring below 16%. Pass rates measure the runs in which an AI agent gets a perfect score across all tasks.*

The UC Berkeley center is co-directed by computer science professor Dawn Song and Haas School of Business professor Christine Parlour. The ALE project has 13 advisers from academia and industry, across multiple universities and companies.

...The pass rates of these models aren't high, which [ALE collaborator Zhenglu] Li attributes to a lack of people from different disciplines currently working to train AI models... "My bigger concern is not the pass rate but the way agents fail," said Benjamin Liu, a Stanford University computer science Ph.D. student and test collaborator, in an email. "They often produce an answer that looks completely plausible but is subtly wrong, and in science a confident wrong answer is more dangerous than no answer, because someone might build on it." ...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/ai-giants-score-below-25-in-uc-berkeley-led-test-of-real-world-application/article_2e499076-aa94-4c53-b4e1-72d6de0c2c67.html.

And then there is also knowing how to get to the carwash:



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNaN0iAuan8.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UC-Berkeley

Straws in the Wind - Part 377

From Inside Higher Ed: *The Auburn University Board of Trustees... gave itself complete control over course offerings, curriculum, degree requirements and academic credentials while eliminating shared governance at the Alabama land-grant university. Faculty say they have serious concerns about the policies and a host of unanswered questions about what the changes will mean in practice. The two policies, passed unanimously without discussion, mimic what Alabama House Bill 580 will require of other public institutions when it takes effect in October. As a land-grant institution created and governed by the state Constitution, Auburn isn't explicitly bound by the law, but lawmakers have made veiled threats to punish noncompliance anyway by withholding state funding for offending institutions. The university appears to be taking a page out of Texas public institutions' playbook by pre-emptively overcomplying with new state law, experts say.*

...The existing Faculty Senate is dissolved. It already held an advisory-only role, but its replacement—the Presidential Academic Advisory Council—"is a shift from faculty-led governance to administratively controlled consultation," the Auburn American Association of University Professors chapter wrote in a statement. The council will "provide advice and perspective, at the President's request and direction, on matters related to academic policy, academic governance, and the academic mission of the University," as well as "confidential" advice on other matters, according to the policy. The body may not issue any public statements on behalf of the university...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/governance/trustees-regents/2026/06/05/auburn-board-takes-curricular-control-dissolves-senate.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Auburn U, politics

Stay away from Wilshire

Wilshire Bl: Utility Inspection

Summary

Utility work and inspections continue on Wilshire Bl and in Westwood Village. Intermittent lane reductions and turn restrictions will be implemented on Wilshire Bl between Westwood Bl and Glendon Av.

Schedule

- June 17 - July 2, approximately 2 weeks
- Monday - Friday, 9 am to 3:30 pm

Traffic Control:

- During this work, the following traffic control will be in effect as needed.

Lane Closures on Wilshire Bl between Westwood and Bl and Glendon Av

- The two right-most lanes on eastbound Wilshire Bl between Westwood Bl and Glendon Av will be closed.
- Eastbound Westwood Bl left turn pocket closed.
- Eastbound Glendon Av left turn pocket closed.
- The westbound middle lane will be closed.

Lane Closures on Wilshire Bl between Glendon Av and Malcolm Av

The center lane of westbound Wilshire Bl will be closed.

- Right turn pocket on southbound Glendon to westbound Wilshire will be closed.
- Right turn pocket closed SB Malcom to WB Wilshire.

Wilshire Blvd between Glendon Av and Malcolm Av
Eastbound

- Center-right lane closed
- Center lane closed
- Left lane closed
- Right-turn pocket closed from northbound Veteran Av to eastbound Wilshire Bl
- Right turn still allowed via taper?

Westbound left-turn pocket to Veteran Av closed.

Other Turn Pocket Closures

- Left-turn pocket from northbound Westwood Bl to westbound Wilshire Bl will be closed.
- Right-turn pocket from southbound Glendon Av to westbound Wilshire Bl will be closed.
- Right-turn pocket from southbound Malcolm Av to westbound Wilshire Bl will be closed.

Pedestrian and Business Access

- Sidewalk closures will be in place in the immediate work area; pedestrians should follow posted detour signage.

Noteworthy:

- All work has or will receive the necessary permits and approvals.
- Access to driveways, residences & businesses will be maintained at all times unless notified in advance.
- Access for pedestrians will be maintained outside of construction zones.
- Access for the Fire Department and emergency responders will be maintained

- Parking restrictions will be implemented in the immediate area of the work zone.
- Construction is dynamic and schedules are subject to change. **24/7 Hotline:** 213-922-6934

Source: https://cloud.sfmc.metro.net/WilshireBl_LaneClosureUtilityInspection.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: traffic, UCLA

Thursday, June 18, 2026

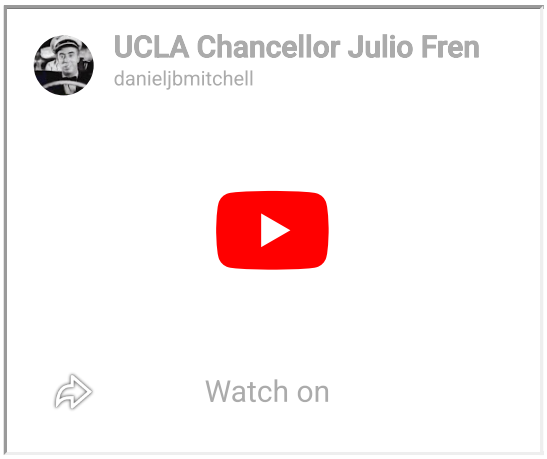
Interview

UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk and his wife Prof. Felicia Marie Knaul were both interviewed at Sinai Temple in West LA on June 6, 2026. Originally on YouTube. Full video preserved at:

dn600309.us.archive.org/0/items/a-laugh-a-tear-a-mitzvah/UCLA Chancellor Frank %26 his wife Prof. Knaul at Sinai Temple Los Angeles 6-6-2026.mp4.

They discuss, among other matters, the issue of antisemitism on campus as well as personal backgrounds.

Excerpt 1: Accepting offer despite encampments
Excerpt 2: Violence unacceptable
Excerpt 3: Student government letter / Antizionism
Excerpt 4: Faculty conduct



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXbh4YyJdKo.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 376

From Reuters: *Law professors overwhelmingly preferred answers drafted by AI over ones written by fellow professors, a new Stanford Law School study found,* suggesting that the technology is capable of legal reasoning and that law students may benefit from AI tutoring. Professors from 14 U.S. law schools developed a list of 40 questions representative of those first-year contracts students ask during faculty office hours. The professors wrote answers to the questions, and researchers had two AI platforms — Google's Gemini 2.5 Pro and NotebookLM — also answer them.*

The same professors blindly judged the short answers head-to-head and chose the AI-generated ones as most beneficial to students 75% of the time. The AI platforms performed just as well as the professor rated most highly in the study...

Full story at https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/ai-beats-law-professors-stanford-tutoring-study-2026-06-02/.

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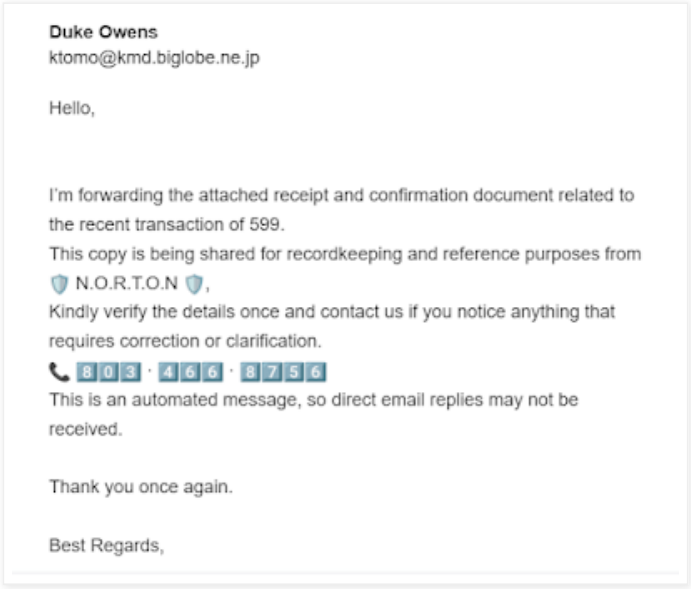
The study is at https://law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/salinas_et_al.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Stanford

Another Scam



Duke Owens
ktomo@kmd.biglobe.ne.jp

Hello,

I'm forwarding the attached receipt and confirmation document related to the recent transaction of 599.
This copy is being shared for recordkeeping and reference purposes from N.O.R.T.O.N,
Kindly verify the details once and contact us if you notice anything that requires correction or clarification.
803 · 466 · 8756
This is an automated message, so direct email replies may not be received.

Thank you once again.

Best Regards,

Another scam. Delete. Don't respond.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: email fraud

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 171

From the Harvard Crimson: *U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon urged Harvard to follow Yale University's example and undertake a sweeping review of its academic practices and campus culture at a congressional hearing last month. In a brief exchange with Rep. Elise M. Stefanik '06, McMahon — who has played a leading role in the Trump administration's pressure campaign against Harvard — praised Yale for a wide-ranging April report that scrutinized the university's admissions policies, grading standards, academic culture, and commitment to free speech.*

That 58-page report, produced by a Yale presidential task force, argued that high tuition, opaque admissions, grade inflation, and constraints on open discourse had helped erode public trust in elite higher education. The authors proposed a series of reforms, including curbing special admissions preferences, adopting a 3.0 mean GPA or another schoolwide grading standard, and revising Yale's mission statement. McMahon called on Harvard to produce a similar self-indictment. "I'd like Harvard to take the Yale example of really doing the research and doing the surveys and understanding what is going on in their community and taking actions on their own," McMahon said in her testimony...

Full story https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/6/16/mcmahon-harvard-yale-testimony/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 12:52 PM No comments:

Labels: Harvard, politics, tuition, Yale

Back to the Future

From the LA Times: *A cheating crisis is growing at American universities as AI rapidly becomes embedded in learning: Extreme and uneven classroom practices are in force to prevent deception, false accusations against students are increasing and the definition of what it means to cheat is shifting, professors, students and specialists in academic integrity say.*

At UCLA, students in a recent sociology class said they were told in an email to "procure a mirror large enough to fully reflect your entire desk-area work space," and turn on their laptop camera so the professor could watch them during an online test. In another course, students said they had to take their oral video exam with their arms crossed in front of them or behind their heads so they couldn't type into AI platforms...

Titi Olotu, a UCLA junior with an accommodation through UCLA's Center for Accessible Education, was weighing whether to drop the sociology professor's course when the mirror email arrived. Her accommodation called for brief snack breaks during exams and the option to write down notes on paper. Olotu said she felt the online proctoring treated any movement as

suspect. "Any little thing, moving, breathing, talking, looking, is cheating," Olotu said. She dropped the class.

The UCLA professor did not respond to requests for an interview. A spokesperson said the school "takes student concerns seriously" and has processes for reviewing student-faculty conflicts but does not discuss individual cases...

Full story at https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2026-06-12/ai-cheating-california-college-students-professors-chatgpt-accusations.

Yours truly was an undergrad at Columbia, 1960-64, long before the internet, smart phones, AI, etc. Final exams were scheduled in the gym. The gym was filled with rows of seats with desks. Several classes were assigned to the gym at the same time and the seats were carefully assigned so that no students taking the exam for your class were seated nearby where you might see their writing. If you dropped your pen or pencil, you were not allowed to bend over and pick it up. You had to signal to a roving proctor that you needed to bend over and the proctor would come and watch. Similarly, you could not leave to go to the restroom without signaling a proctor to get permission. The restroom door was open and a proctor was assigned to sit in the entrance. There was a mirror inside the restroom so that the proctor could watch what you were doing. (Columbia was all male at the time.)

Seems like we are going back to the future. The "benefit" of the old Columbia system was that cheating was very unlikely, so you wouldn't be accused of it falsely. Whether today's students will accept such a system remains to be seen.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: Columbia, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 375

From the Daily Princetonian: *The Princeton University Investment Company (PRINCO) has ended its divestment from publicly traded oil and gas companies, according to a letter from PRINCO President Vincent Tuohey published Monday. The University will maintain its previously-established dissociation from the thermal coal and tar sands portions of the fossil fuel industry. PRINCO, which manages the University's endowment, has set a net-zero emissions goal for the University endowment portfolio by 2046, according to the letter, which is the same year as the University's campus net-zero target. As a step towards achieving a net-zero endowment, PRINCO previously committed to eliminating all of its holdings in publicly traded fossil fuel companies in 2022. At this time, the University dissociated from 90 fossil fuel companies involved in thermal coal and tar sands, as mandated by the Board of Trustees.*

In the letter, Tuohey described the change in divestment policy as part of PRINCO's "revised approach" to balancing support for the University's research mission and its commitment to climate sustainability...

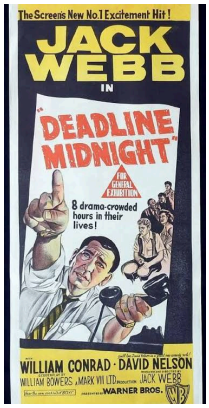
Full story at https://www.dailyprincetonian.com/article/2026/06/princeton-news-adpol-princo-discontinues-divestment-publicly-traded-oil-gas-companies.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, Princeton U

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

"Budget" passed by deadline



As we noted yesterday, June 15 was the (midnight) budget deadline for the legislature to pass a "budget." And it did so. However, as we also noted, the budget that was passed isn't the final version. Talks continue with the governor, with the primary sticking points involving spending on health care issues (and not about higher education or UC). Meanwhile, the governor's attention is being diverted by an investigation by the feds which he forcefully argues is politically motivated. However, there is just enough stuff about his wife's nonprofit activities to open the door to more revelations. The governor yesterday released a kind of preemptive Checkers speech (Google It!) in which he demanded that the feds leave his wife and kids out of it.*

In short, there is likely to be more drama in Sacramento, budget and nonbudget, but with little ultimate effect on next year's UC budget.

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*The speech may be seen at:

https://ia601802.us.archive.org/14/items/newsom-may-june-2026/newsom%206-15-2026%20FBI%20investigation.mp4.

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More information on the budget negotiations is at:

https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article316141655.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 9:17 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, politics, State Budget, UC, UC budget crisis

More on the Assembly

Last week, we took note of an upcoming Assembly meeting on June 11. Yesterday, we referred to one aspect of that meeting pertaining to UC admissions and the SAT/testing issue. As we also noted yesterday, yours truly could attend the full meeting due to medical issues. However, there was a segment on external political developments affecting UC as well as AI which has both political and academic implications.

Provost Newman expressed concern with regarding proposed federal policy that would require political evaluation of grants. She also noted that despite UC's various court victories, the flow of federal funding for research has not resumed.

There was a separate segment on state matters. Both houses of the legislature were proposing state budgets for next year that would be more generous to UC that the May Revise. What the final deal will be remained open. There was some language in the proposed bills that made funding contingent on some immediate changes in admission that can't happen since the

admissions cycle for fall has already occurred. Apart from the proposed state research bond ballot measure which UC is supporting, it is also trying to be included in a proposed state housing bond.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: legislature, politics, State Budget, UC, UC budget crisis

Straws in the Wind - Part 374

From the Daily Princetonian: *The University has implemented rules prohibiting reporters from recording, photographing, or filming faculty meetings. The new rules went into effect from the May 11 faculty meeting, marking a departure from past practices in which reporters were able to record meetings for transcription and take photographs of the Faculty Room inside Nassau Hall.*

The new rules also limit the number of reporters to two per campus publication and stipulate that reporters notify the Office of Communications of their attendance at least 24 hours in advance of meetings. Campus press must also obtain media credentials before each faculty meeting. Campus radio remains permitted to broadcast faculty meetings, though no campus radio station currently broadcasts the meetings...

Full story at https://www.dailyprincetonian.com/article/2026/06/princeton-news-faculty-meeting-recording-policy-campus-press-ivy-league.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: Princeton U

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge?- Part 170

From the Harvard Crimson: *The Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection are investigating the Harvard Kennedy School over allegations that the school mishandled asbestos-related materials during Littauer*

Center renovation projects, according to a person familiar with the matter. The complaint, filed April, alleges that the Kennedy School disturbed asbestos-containing material without prior testing, failed to notify occupants of potential asbestos exposures, and did not file required permits from the City of Cambridge or MassDEP for the construction project. ...Both agencies observed spare parts containing asbestos in storage, according to the person.

HKS did not notify faculty or staff of the complaint until ...roughly three hours after The Crimson reached out for comment. HKS Executive Dean Joshua G. McIntosh then sent an email to faculty and staff informing them of the allegations. "We take allegations about improper construction practices very seriously, and we are working with urgency to investigate these allegations and take appropriate action as needed." ...

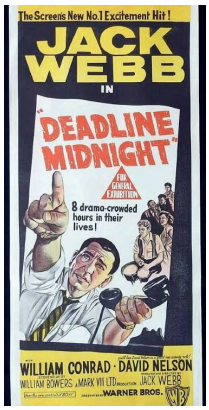
Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/6/9/hks-asbestos-handling/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Monday, June 15, 2026

The midnight state budget deadline approaches



To meet the constitutional deadline, the legislature has until midnight tonight to pass a "budget." The Senate version of what is currently under consideration can be found at the link below:

https://sbud.senate.ca.gov/system/files/2026-06/legislatures-version-of-the-budget-summary.pdf

You will note, if you go to that link, that the higher ed proposals deal with the community colleges for the most part, not with UC.

The Assembly version has more detail. See:

https://abgt.assembly.ca.gov/system/files/2026-06/floor-report-of-the-2026-27-budget-june-11-2026.pdf

Below is the summary for UC:

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University of California

• Provides $254.3 million ongoing General Fund for the fifth and final year of the Governor's Compact funding of the UC. Also includes $96.3 million for partial funding of the fourth year, as expected based on the 2025 budget agreement.

• Extends the repayment of a one-time 3 percent funding reduction of $129.7 million included in the 2025 budget by one year from 2026-27 until 2027-28.

• Maintains a 2025 Budget Act agreement to defer the 2025-26 compact's $240.8 million ongoing General Fund to support a 5% base increase until 2027-28. As part of the deferral arrangement, the state would plan to provide UC with one-time back payments in 2026-27 and 2027-28.

• Maintains a 2024-25 Budget Act agreement to defer $31 million ongoing General Fund to continue the 5-year program to replace nonresident students with California students at the Berkeley, Los Angeles and San Diego campuses until 2027-28.

• Provides $1.5 million General Fund to support the First Star Academy Youth Cohorts at UC campuses, as proposed in the May Revision.

• Includes $9 million one-time to continue the Cal-Bridge program.

• Adds $750,000 one-time for the ENLACE program.

• Provides $3.4 million one-time for the University of California Menopause Centers of Excellence.

• Includes $5 million one-time for the UCLA Center for Reproductive Health, Law, and Policy.

• Adds $3.6 million one-time to expand Prime RX program at UC San Diego.

• *Appropriates $1.8 million one-time to UC Berkeley for the ACCESS optometry program.*

• *Includes $3 million one-time to UC San Diego for a workforce development initiative.*

• *Adds $6.5 million one-time to UC for the Voting Right's Program.*

• *Provides $6.5 million one-time to UCLA for the Ralph J. Bunche Center*

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In essence, various pet programs are listed for additional funding. Various deferrals continue. As noted in prior postings, even if a budget is passed, revisions are possible as the Democratic legislative leaders continue to negotiate with the governor.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 11:32 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, politics, State Budget, UC budget crisis

Slowly following the roadmap

We noted on this blog that there was a Zoom meeting of the Assembly of the systemwide Academic Senate last Thursday. Yours truly was able to attend only parts of that meeting due to medical issues. However, at around he same time, BOARS released a "roadmap" concerning UC admissions policy.* It proposes to create working groups to study the SAT/testing issue and the A-G requirements.

There was some controversy at the Assembly over the working group for A-G. It wasn't exactly clear what the concern was but yours truly suspects it had something to do with the recent Ethnic Studies brouhaha. ??? In any event, despite an effort for the Assembly officially to express a view that there was no need for more A-G study, the Assembly did not take that position. So there will be more A-G study,

More concerning was the SAT/testing issue. According to a report in the LA Times,** the number of signatures of UC STEM faculty on the letter pushing for reinstatement of the SAT for incoming STEM majors has grown to over 1,400.

It should be noted that the BOARS roadmap appears to have been prepared *before* the letter and proposes moving along at the usual Senate deliberative pace. While we have noted the seeming impracticality of having an SAT requirement only for some prospective majors, we suggested a more responsive and rapid effort over the summer - not over another full academic year as the roadmap suggests - to create an interim report that could be discussed at the September Regents meeting. (The Regents are surely aware of the controversy; they read the LA Times.) Although a concern was expressed that waiting a year for a report pushes back actually implementing something at least a year, that seems to be the likely scenario at this point.

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*https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-academic-senate-announces-plan-review-admissions-policies;
https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/committees/boars/documents/uc-academic-senate-boars-roadmap-executive-summary-06-11-2026.pdf;
https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/committees/boars/documents/uc-academic-senate-boars-roadmap-06-05-2026.pdf;

https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/committees/boars/documents/academic-senate-chair-to-faculty-re-boars-roadmap-06-11-2026.pdf.

**https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2026-06-11/uc-sat-act-test-requirement-admissions-reconsider.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, diversity, UC, UC Regents

Straws in the Wind - Part 373

From Insider Higher Ed: *Former Virginia Tech rector John Rocovich sued Gov. Abigail Spanberger this week, as well as the university and the Board of Visitors, over his removal, and he's seeking immediate reinstatement to his seat, according to Cardinal News. Spanberger removed Rocovich from the board late last month, accusing him of ethical violations. But to date, the Democratic governor has not specified her exact reasons for removing Rocovich, a major GOP donor who was appointed by her Republican predecessor, Glenn Youngkin.*

She's already appointed a replacement, and Rocovich did not attend the last board meeting... The legal battle between Spanberger and Rocovich is happening amid an effort by the governor to reshape Virginia boards after Youngkin appointed numerous conservative donors and activists. Rocovich was supposed to oversee a closely watched presidential search...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/06/12/former-virginia-tech-rector-sues-over-removal.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, University of Virginia

Joining

From the Daily Cal: ...*Endorsing their STEM colleagues' petition, more than 120 humanities and social science professors across the UC system released an open letter Thursday urging the university to go beyond the STEM letter call by including the SAT and ACT's verbal reasoning requirement as well. Stefano DellaVigna, who is the chair of UC Berkeley's economics department and who signed the humanities letter, said in an email some student difficulties are most likely a result of "Covid shock," but SAT and ACT scores are better able to predict college success compared to high school grades.*

...The humanities letter marks an escalation of a faculty-led campaign to reverse the 2020 UC Board of Regents decision to remove all standardized testing requirements from freshman admissions. While the STEM letter focuses

on declining math skills, the humanities letter argues the alleged harms of test-blind admissions extend across disciplines. "Without foundational literacy, students face difficulties across university disciplines," the letter states. "Eliminating the metrics that diagnose these preparation gaps imposed significant barriers for underprepared students and their instructors alike."

The letter additionally challenges that standardized testing requirements are inequitable, arguing that "no admissions criterion is uncorrelated with social background," and asserts that extracurricular activities and essay writing style are strongly associated with social class...

Mina Aganagic, math and physics professor at UC Berkeley, wrote in an email that the timeline in BOARS' roadmap does not allow enough time for standardized testing requirements to be reinstated by the 2027 admissions cycle, which is the timing the open letter requested. Aganagic's signature is first on the STEM petition.

"The BOARs roadmap would delay the process by a year at least," Aganagic said in the email. "This means a whole extra generation of ten's of thousands of freshmen, and hundreds of thousands of applicants, would be admitted by a nearly blinded, AI and grade inflation randomized admissions process."

Aganagic also questioned the proposed roadmap, claiming that the UC system will redo research it has already conducted and arguing that the changes to the SAT, including becoming digital, "are unlikely to affect earlier findings." ...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/uc/joining-stem-faculty-uc-humanities-faculty-endorse-use-of-standardized-tests-in-admissions-as-academic/article_a90605be-44b9-4d92-9ada-e165b20588bf.html.

As we have noted in a separate post today, the BOARS "roadmap" approach - which was developed before the current petitions - seems unresponsive to the concerns being expressed. There are better approaches such as an expedited study over the summer, followed by Regents discussion at the September meetings. Unfortunately, being responsive or not seems to be in the discretion of the chair of the Academic Council who prefers "not."

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:10 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC

Sunday, June 14, 2026

Forecasting

Cohen at Center; Nickelsburg to her right.

From the State Controller: https://www.sco.ca.gov/eo_pressrel_27525.html

Building on her release of California's timely audited financial statements ahead of major budget decisions, California State Controller Malia M. Cohen today announced the formation of her Council of Economic Advisors to provide evidence-based insights, and practical and actionable policy recommendations on crosscutting issues that affect the state's fiscal condition.

*Chaired by **Dr. Jerry Nickelsburg, UCLA Anderson Forecast Faculty Director Emeritus**, the Controller's Council of Economic Advisors includes six experts who will advise the Controller on global, national, state and local fiscal concerns. Together, the panel will assess California's economic performance throughout its regions and industries and recommend data-driven policy solutions to address major statewide challenges including in affordability, tax policy, healthcare, education, small business development, workforce development and equitable growth.*

"While we continue to reimagine financial transparency in order to give Californians a clearer understanding of the state's financial condition, we need to call upon expert talent that has its fingers on the pulse of what is driving global, national, statewide and regional markets, and how it affects our state's competitiveness as the world's fourth largest economy," said Controller Cohen. "The members of this Council of Economic Advisors have graciously agreed to share their objective and independent economic analysis and recommendations on issues that significantly affect Californians, our diverse regions, and our state's revenues today and in the future. I wholeheartedly thank them for agreeing to serve in this important role."

By combining rigorous economic expertise with real-time fiscal data – including daily and monthly cash receipts and expenditure data from the State Controller's Office – the council will serve as a trusted resource for the State Controller in championing policies that safeguard California's fiscal health and promote statewide economic opportunity.

"On behalf of this Council of Economic Advisors, we are honored to individually and collectively provide Controller Cohen and her office with economic insights, evidence, and related recommendations that may have a critical impact on California, it's residents and the state's limited financial resources," said Dr. Nickelsburg...

Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:13 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UCLA

Cutting Down

Apparently, it's not just the STEM fields that are finding incoming students unprepared. From the Daily Cal:

Faculty in the humanities are grappling with a changing educational landscape as debates arise regarding student preparation and nationwide headlines question students' abilities to read longer texts. Some faculty across the humanities report cutting down the amount of reading they assign to students, though others have found that students are keeping up with a standard workload the same way they would have years ago. Carlos Noreña, a UC Berkeley history professor specializing in ancient history,said the amount of reading he could comfortably assign while expecting students to read a "substantial" portion of it has dropped over the past 20 years at UC Berkeley. "We are now reaching a crisis point where if the number (of pages) goes down further, it's unclear to me whether my discipline of history can really be taught," Noreña said.

English professor Grace Lavery, said while she noticed some students struggling with denser Charles Dickens novels, these issues weren't new or necessarily problematic. "The reason is that the Dickens novels I teach are long and difficult," Lavery said. "I imagine that if I had been teaching these novels in the same way back in the 1950s, I would have had exactly the same problems." ...

...Some faculty said they are increasingly excerpting longer works rather than having students read full books. Margaret Byrne Chair in American History Mark Brilliant said the earliest version of the History of California and the American West course he taught required seven full books, while his most recent iteration exclusively consisted of excerpts... Brilliant also noted that the number of books and pages he assigned have shrunk over the 22 years that he has taught at UC Berkeley.

Fellow history professor Trevor Jackson said... his students avoid using AI to write, but sometimes ask it to summarize texts while reading. "I found that very upsetting, because I've

read the AI summary of my own book, and it's all wrong," Jackson said. "Even a good summary is still not grappling with the text."

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/academics/reaching-a-crisis-point-uc-berkeley-humanities-professors-lower-expectations-for-assigned-readings/article_a1e6e366-9c0b-48a2-b662-5191a7120bf4.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC-Berkeley

Straws in the Wind - Part 371

From Inside Higher Ed: *A new report* on the state of humanities scholarship made waves in higher ed circles when it was released Friday, and has since drawn criticism from professors across the humanities. Commissioned by Vanderbilt University chancellor Daniel Diermeier and Washington University in St. Louis chancellor Andrew Martin, the "State of Scholarship" report finds fault with disciplines including anthropology, philosophy and history—not for their content but for the quality of their scholarship, which the report's authors argue is too often driven by political ideology rather than the pursuit of truth and knowledge...*

Critiques of the report are broad and varied. National Association of Scholars research director David Randall said the authors rehash decades-old arguments against relativism and don't go far enough in their recommendations to reform the humanities. "If they're actually serious about academic reform, they will act rather than sponsor more faculty gab-fests," he wrote of Diermeier and Martin. Pennsylvania State University communications professor Bradford Vivian wrote on Bluesky that "a better title for the Vanderbilt report on the humanities would be [William F. Buckley Jr.'s] 'God and Man at Yale Part II.'" ...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty/research/2026/06/10/professors-say-vanderbilt-report-misrepresents-their-work.

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*https://cdn.vanderbilt.edu/vu-wpfsx/wp-content/uploads/sites/51/2026/06/State-of-Scholarship_Report_Final.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: U of St. Louis, Vanderbilt U

Saturday, June 13, 2026

This too shall pass...

In order for the Legislature to pass a "budget" by June 15 - the constitutional deadline, it actually had to have something available to pass yesterday, June 12, to meet legislative rules. Something was made available which you can find at:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB109.

If you go to the above link, you will find endless language appropriating funds for various purposes. To see the UC portion, search for "6440-001-0001" and keep scrolling down. (There

are also scattered other references to UC elsewhere in the budget.) Once the legislature has passed the budget bill - probably along with associated "trailer bills" that relate to the budget, it has done its constitutional duty. The governor, however, could in principle remove items using his line-item veto. But in today's world of one-party rule, it is more likely that further discussion will occur between the Democratic leaders and the governor with further adjustments to the budget forthcoming before July 1.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 11:10 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, legislature, politics, State Budget, UC budget crisis

Transfers

Given restrictions on anything resembling affirmative action stemming from the state's Prop 209 and pressure from the feds, other admissions devices that provide diversity are being explored. One is through transfers from community colleges. The various community colleges have a diverse enrollment that can vary by location.

From the Bruin: *A program that will give some transfer students priority consideration for admission to UCLA is set to be implemented this fall. UCLA created the Associate Degree for Transfer Pilot Program in compliance with Assembly Bill 1291, which Gov. Gavin Newsom signed in October 2023. The pilot program will be available to students who achieve an associate degree in certain majors at one of 10 California Community Colleges, including Cypress College and Oxnard College.*

...The pilot program could increase diversity and the population of first-generation students at UCLA... Students must receive an associate degree in one of eight selected majors – anthropology, chemistry, environmental science, geology, mathematics, history, political science and philosophy – to participate in the program... UCLA selected the 10 campuses to partner with – all located within Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Ventura and Kern counties – based on location and student enrollment...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/06/07/ucla-pilot-program-to-expand-opportunities-for-community-college-transfers.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, community colleges, diversity, legislature, politics, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 371

From Inside Higher Ed: *Kentucky State University projects its enrollment will drop by about 20 percent by next spring, partly due to a new state law that forces the institution to disenroll students who owe the university money, a spokesperson says. "The projected enrollment drop includes a number of factors, of which the financial components of SB [Senate Bill] 185 are significant," said Michael Strysick, the university's chief strategic communications officer.*

He said total in-person and online student enrollment in the spring, including dual enrollment high school students, was 2,873, but the university estimates that will decline to 2,300 by next spring... SB 185—which the GOP-controlled General Assembly passed and Democratic governor Andy Beshear signed into law in April—gives the state significant financial control of the historically Black university. Among many other things, it says students who owe the university $1,000 or more for over 60 days will be disenrolled...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/06/11/kentucky-state-projects-enrollment-plunge-after-new-law.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, Kentucky State U, politics

Friday, June 12, 2026

Still Ahead

The latest cash report from the state controller for May 2026 (11/12ths of the current fiscal year), shows receipts modestly ahead of projections made at the time the governor's May Revision was presented. They are way ahead of the projections made almost a year ago when the current state budget was adopted, well over $25 billion ahead. The income tax is mainly the source of the overage, presumably due to capital gains on AI-related stocks.

All of this news is background to the ongoing legislative efforts to pass a budget. Because of various rules regarding legislation enactment, the legislature needs to adopt something called a budget today to meet the constitutional requirement of enacting a budget by June 15.

You can find the last cash report at:

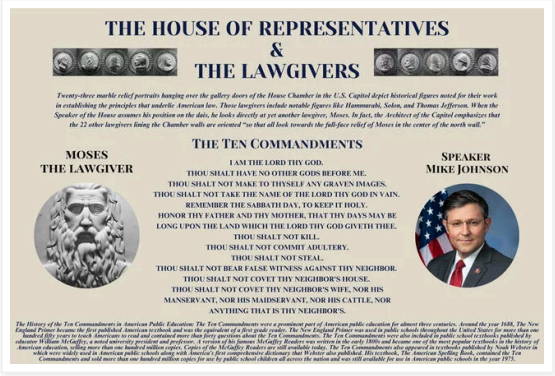
https://www.sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD/CASH/May2026StatementofGeneralFundCashReceiptsandDisbursements.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: controller, governor, legislature, politics, State Budget

Straws in the Wind - Part 370

From Inside Higher Ed: *Louisiana higher ed systems say their institutions are posting the Ten Commandments in classrooms, following orders from Republican lawmakers. A Louisiana State University System spokesperson said in an email to Inside Higher Ed that all LSU campuses have either put up the displays or are in the process of doing so. A University of Louisiana System spokesperson said in an email that all of its campuses "are actively working through installation logistics" and "intend to have them displayed no later than the start of the fall semester." Southern University System and Louisiana Community and Technical College System officials didn't return requests for comment.*


THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
&
THE LAWGIVERS

Twenty-three marble relief portraits hanging over the gallery doors of the House Chamber in the U.S. Capitol depict historical figures noted for their work in establishing the principles that underlie American law. Those lawgivers include notable figures like Hammurabi, Solon, and Thomas Jefferson. When the Speaker of the House assumes his position on the dais, he looks directly at yet another lawgiver, Moses. In fact, the Architect of the Capitol emphasizes that the 22 other lawgivers lining the Chamber walls are oriented "so that all look towards the full-face relief of Moses in the center of the north wall."

MOSES
THE LAWGIVER

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I AM THE LORD THY GOD.
THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.
THOU SHALT NOT MAKE TO THYSELF ANY GRAVEN IMAGES.
THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN.
REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY.
HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER, THAT THY DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE.
THOU SHALT NOT KILL.
THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.
THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.
THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR.
THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE.
THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MANSERVANT, NOR HIS MAIDSERVANT, NOR HIS CATTLE, NOR ANYTHING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOR'S.

SPEAKER
MIKE JOHNSON

The History of the Ten Commandments in American Public Education: The Ten Commandments were a prominent part of American public education for almost three centuries. Around the year 1688, The New England Primer became the first published American textbook and was the equivalent of a first grade reader. The New England Primer was used in public schools throughout the United States for more than one hundred fifty years to teach Americans to read and contained more than forty questions about the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were also included in public school textbooks published by educator William McGuffey, a noted university president and professor. A version of his famous McGuffey Readers was written in the early 1800s and became one of the most popular textbooks in the history of American education. Between 1836 and 1920, more than 120 million copies of the McGuffey Readers were published. Noah Webster, a Founding Father, also published textbooks which were widely used in American public schools along with America's first comprehensive dictionary that Webster also published. His textbook, The American Spelling Book, contained the Ten Commandments and sold more than one hundred million copies for use by public school children all across the nation and was still available for use in American public schools in the year 1975.

The Louisiana Family Forum, a conservative "family policy council," donated the posters, The Louisiana Illuminator reported earlier. Republican state attorney general Liz Murrill released four posters that can be used—all with the Ten Commandments in the middle, flanked by other information. One, for instance, is titled "The House of Representatives & the Lawgivers," in which the religious text has, on its left, an image of the "Moses the Lawgiver" marble relief from the walls of the U.S. House chamber and, on its right, a photo of current U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson, a Republican from Louisiana...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/06/09/following-law-la-colleges-post-ten-commandments-classes.

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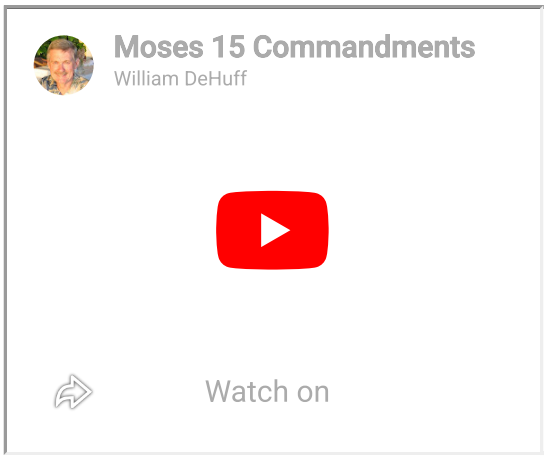
We don't know what happened to the other five:



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8ihcq4hzR4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: politics

Thursday, June 11, 2026

Assembly Meeting Today

There is a meeting of the Academic Senate's systemwide Assembly today via Zoom. Any Senate member can attend, although only Assembly members can vote. Information on how to attend is at:

https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/assembly/assembly-agenda-06-11-26.pdf.

The meeting does not seem to have especially controversial items on the agenda. There is, however, a report from BOARS. As blog readers will know, STEM faculty have signed a letter asking for a reinstitution of the SAT requirement for undergrad admissions of STEM majors. The last yours truly saw from news accounts, there were over 1,400 signatures. We have noted in past posts that instituting a requirement by major field when incoming freshmen either don't know what major they will follow or may change their minds, raises issues. Nonetheless, we urged some kind of response by the Senate; perhaps a special committee that would look at the matter of the summer and report to the Senate and the Regents in September, could be a response.

The BOARS report on the Agenda was developed before the SAT matter developed. However, nothing would prevent some ad hoc discussion of the new item, either in the BOARS segment or as New Business. There is an opportunity to discuss New Business at the end of the agenda. Just saying...

Posted by California Policy Issues at 6:35 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC

Revived

From the LA Times: ...*There is still hope for the Village Theatre, which recently received a breath of new life thanks to some of Hollywood's biggest names. For the first time since 2024, the theater opened its doors early last month for the Los Angeles debut of Billie Eilish and James Cameron's co-directed concert film, "Hit Me Hard and Soft: The Tour." Hundreds of fans filled the college town's sidewalks, and streets were closed for the black SUVs that dropped off A-listers and executives on the bright blue carpet.*

The event was the first of a limited number of premieres and screenings planned for this summer to support a 12-month renovation set to begin this fall. In July, the theater will host a special three-week run of Christopher Nolan's "The Odyssey" in 70 mm format. The revival is being led by Village Directors Circle, a group of 35 filmmakers who purchased the theater in 2024. They include prominent directors Jason Reitman, who is leading the effort, and Christopher Nolan, J.J. Abrams, Guillermo del Toro, Judd Apatow, Steven Spielberg and Chloé Zhao...

Full story at https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/business/story/2026-06-03/westwood-village-theater-plans-its-2027-reopening.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 369

From Forbes: ...*Dartmouth College [has] announced a landmark $25 million gift from Karen and Jim Frank and their son Daniel Frank to support Dartmouth Dialogues, the college's initiative focused on civil discourse, bridge-building, and the free exchange of ideas. The gift, one of the largest ever made at an American university specifically dedicated to civil discourse programming, will help endow the initiative and expand its reach across campus.*

...The announcement reinforces a trend emerging across highly selective universities. While students often assume colleges are looking for entrepreneurs, researchers, or changemakers, they are also increasingly drawn to applicants who demonstrate something rarer: a genuine love of learning paired with the humility to question assumptions, revise beliefs, and continue growing. Increasingly, supplemental essays reward students who can wrestle with this complexity.

Last year, Harvard University asked applicants to describe a time they strongly disagreed with someone and explain what they learned from the interaction. Amherst College similarly invited students to reflect on engaging with viewpoints different from their own. George Washington University went even further, explicitly framing civil discourse as a defining characteristic of its community and asking students to reflect on meaningful dialogue that created new perspectives or deeper relationships.

...Admissions officers are often less interested in whether a student changed someone's mind than in whether the student demonstrated the maturity to engage a challenging idea without dismissing it. Can they seek understanding before judgment? ...

Full story at https://www.forbes.com/sites/lizdoestone/2026/06/02/what-dartmouths-25-million-gift-signals-to-applicants/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: admissions, Dartmouth

Wednesday, June 10, 2026

Delays

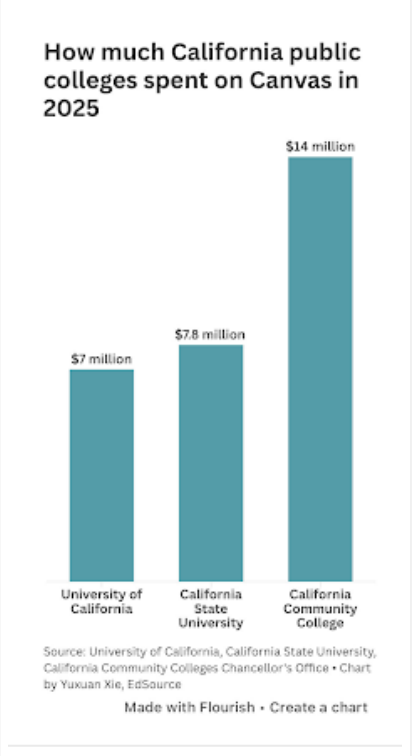
Some blog readers may have noticed that the blog has been delayed in posting some news and has been delayed in being sent to a related Facebook account. It's all due to medical issues in the yours truly household.
We may be delayed in picking up items or may miss usual timelines for several more days or more.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:40 PM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Let's not forget about Canvas

Remember when the various Canvas plans were hacked and many higher ed institutions, including UCLA, came to a halt?


How much California public colleges spent on Canvas in 2025
$14 million
$7.8 million
$7 million
University of California
California State University
California Community College
Source: University of California, California State University, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office • Chart by Yuxuan Xie, EdSource
Made with Flourish • Create a chart

EdSource has information on what it costs. A bigger issue is that the hacking of Canvas creates questions about dependence on that company, data security, etc.

...Last month, a data breach by hacker group ShinyHunters upended access to Canvas and led to service disruptions around the world at thousands of schools. California's public colleges and universities were preparing for exams at the moment when Instructure was held ransom: pay up, or terabytes of private data, including student and staff records, would be leaked, the group threatened...

[State] Sen. Melissa Hurtado, a Bakersfield Democrat, has called for a legislative audit into Canvas. "The Canvas breach exposes the growing risks of concentrating massive amounts of student records, academic systems and institutional operations into a single platform," she said.

Full story at https://edsource.org/2026/how-much-do-california-colleges-and-universities-spend-on-canvas/759415.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: community colleges, CSU, email fraud, UC, UCLA

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